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Concert: Ithaca College Wind Ensemble

Ithaca College Wind Ensemble

Stephen Peterson

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ITHACA COLLEGE

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

ITHACA COLLEGE WIND ENSEMBLE

Stephen Peterson, conductor

**Ford Hall
Saturday, February 27, 2009
3:00 p.m.**

ITHACA

PROGRAM

Radiant Joy (2006)

Steven Bryant
(b. 1972)
13'

Air Mosaic (1991)

Rodney Rogers
(b. 1953)
5'

- I. *The evidence of things not seen*
- II. *Mosaic*

Southern Harmony (1998)

Donald Grantham
(b. 1947)
11'

- I. *The Midnight Cry*
- II. *Wondrous Love*
- III. *Exhilaration*
- IV. *The Soldier's Return*

INTERMISSION

Arctic Dreams (1991)

Michael Colgrass
(b. 1932)
24'

- I. *Inuit Landscape*
- II. *Throat Singing with Laughter*
- III. *The Whispering Voices of the Spirits Who Ride
with the Lights in the Sky*
- IV. *Polar Night*
- V. *Spring Light: Ice Floating in the Sun*
- VI. *The Hunt*
- VII. *Drum Dancer*

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Program Notes

Steven Bryant is an active composer and conductor with a varied catalog, including works for wind ensemble, orchestra, electronic and electro-acoustic creations, chamber music, and music for the web. He studied composition with John Corigliano at The Juilliard School, Cindy McTee at the University of North Texas, and Francis McBeth at Ouachita University. He resides in Austin, Texas.

Bryant writes:

Radiant Joy was my first new work for winds after two and a half years away, and one that I hope is equal to its title in character and purity of intent. It comes after a difficult period in my personal life, and thus its character was something of a surprise to me. This work began life as a strict, 12-tone, serialized creature modeled on Webern - I wanted something sparse and tightly constructed (in harmonic and intervallic terms), while still retaining a vital rhythmic pulse. After several sketches that ended in anger and frustration, I realized I was metaphorically banging my head against the creative wall, and perhaps I should stop forcing this music into existence with a prescriptive process, and simply listen inwardly to what I actually wanted to hear. The result is simultaneously the opposite of what I was originally trying to create, and also its direct realization - the vital rhythmic pulse is still prominent, but the harmonic materials veered toward the language of 70s/80s funk/jazz/fusion (at least, that's what I've been told). Regardless, the piece is intended to emanate joy and 'good vibes' (literally - the vibraphone is critical to the piece!), for the performers, the audience, and the composer!

Rodney Rogers writes music for a variety of instrumental and vocal combinations, from orchestral music to works for solo performers. A recent CD of his compositions entitled *Complicated Optimism* (Albany Records) contains works for solo, instrumental and vocal groups. In addition, his music appears on solo albums by various concert artists in both the United States and England. *Air Mosaic* appears on four CDs produced by nationally recognized university wind ensembles. Four of Rogers' works received their New York premieres at Carnegie Recital Hall (Weiss Hall). Rogers is the recipient of composition awards from BMI, ASCAP, and the Music Teachers National Association (MTNA). He has received commissions from the College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA, 50th Anniversary), the MTNA, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA Consortium Commission), and numerous individual performers and chamber groups. Fellowships in composition include Tanglewood, the MacDowell Colony, and the Yaddo Artist Colony. His music is published by Hal Leonard and Carl Fischer and is also available through the composer. Rogers' received his PhD. from the University of Iowa, has taught

composition at Louisiana State University and Lawrence University (Appleton, WI), and is currently on the composition faculty at Arizona State University.

Rogers writes:

Air Mosaic was commissioned for the 50th Anniversary of the College Band Directors National Association and premiered at the national convention in 1991. Designed specifically for a large ensemble, the two movements are contrasting in character but united through motivic relationships and shared thematic material. *The evidence of things not seen* is comprised of three sections, each a setting of the Southern hymn tune "Prospect" (dating from an antebellum hymnal that includes "Amazing Grace"). Most melodic and harmonic material of the movement reflects some aspect of the hymn and a text associated with it ("The Lone Wild Bird"). In the opening section, the percussion instruments create bell-like sonorities around the woodwind presentation of the theme. A solo horn initiates the second part that gradually adds more brass instruments. The section ends with a chorale-like harmonization for the full ensemble. The movement's conclusion features a solo presentation of phrases from "Prospect." The title of the movement comes from Paul's Letter to the Hebrews (11:1). The second movement, *Mosaic*, is constructed from a collection of themes and motives, constantly juxtaposed and varied. The main melodic ideas are fanfare-like in character and feature instrumentation with stark contrasts in color.

Composer **Donald Grantham** is the recipient of numerous awards and prizes in composition, including the Prix Lili Boulanger, the Nissim/ASCAP Orchestral Composition Prize, First Prize in the Concordia Chamber Symphony's Awards to American Composers, a Guggenheim Fellowship, three grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, three First Prizes in the NBA/William Revelli Competition, two First Prizes in the ABA/Ostwald Competition, and First Prize in the National Opera Association's Biennial Composition Competition. His music has been praised for its "elegance, sensitivity, lucidity of thought, clarity of expression and fine lyricism" in a Citation awarded by the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. In recent years, his works have been performed by the orchestras of Cleveland, Dallas, Atlanta and the American Composers Orchestra, among many others, and he has fulfilled commissions in media from solo instruments to opera. His music is published by Piquant Press, Peer-Southern, E. C. Schirmer, G. Schirmer, Warner Bros. and Mark Foster, and a number of his works have been commercially recorded. Grantham resides in Austin, Texas and is the Frank C. Erwin, Jr. Centennial Professor of Composition at the University of Texas at Austin. With Kent Kennan, he is coauthor of *The Technique of Orchestration* (Prentice-Hall).

Grantham writes:

In 1835, William "Singin' Billy" Walker's songbook *Southern Harmony* was first published. This remarkable collection contains, according to its title page, "a choice collection of tunes, hymns, psalms, odes, and anthems; selected from the most eminent authors in the United States." In fact, few of the numbers in the book are identified as the work of a particular composer. Many are folksongs (provided with religious texts), others are traditional sacred tunes, while some are revival songs that were widely known and sung throughout the south. The book was immensely popular, selling an amazing 600,000 copies before the Civil War, and was commonly stocked "along with groceries and tobacco" in general stores across the American frontier. From 1884 until World War II, an annual all-day mass performance of selections from *Southern Harmony*, called the 'Benton Big Singing,' was held on the Benton, Kentucky courthouse lawn. The event drew participants from Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri, and Illinois.

The music of **Southern Harmony** has a somewhat exotic sound to modern audiences. The tunes often use modal or pentatonic rather than major or minor scales. The harmony is even more out of the ordinary, employing chord positions, voice leading and progressions that are far removed from the European music that dominated concert halls at the time. These harmonizations were dismissed as crude and primitive when they first appeared. Now they are regarded as inventive, unique, and powerfully representative of the American character.

In my use of several tunes from *Southern Harmony*, I have attempted to preserve the flavor of the original vocal works in a setting that fully realizes the potential of the wind ensemble and the individual characteristics of each song.

Michael Colgrass began his musical career in Chicago where his first professional experiences were as a jazz drummer (1944-49). He graduated from the University of Illinois in 1954 with a degree in performance and composition and his studies included training with Darius Milhaud at the Aspen Festival and Lukas Foss at Tanglewood. He served two years as timpanist in the Seventh Army Symphony Orchestra in Stuttgart, Germany and then spent eleven years supporting his composing activities as a free-lance percussionist in New York City. He won the 1978 Pulitzer Prize for Music for *Déjà vu*, which was commissioned and premiered by the New York Philharmonic. In addition, he received an Emmy Award in 1982 for the PBS documentary "Soundings: The Music of Michael Colgrass." He has been awarded two Guggenheim Fellowships, A Rockefeller Grant, First Prize in the Barlow and Sudler International Wind Ensemble Competitions, and the 1988 Jules Leger Prize for Chamber Music. He lives in Toronto and makes his living

internationally as a composer. His wife, Ulla, is a journalist and editor who writes about music and the arts, and his son Neal is an editor, journalist and screenwriter.

Colgrass writes:

Arctic Dreams is a tone poem for symphonic wind ensemble, inspired by the Arctic and by the lives and legends of the Inuit (the "Eskimos") who live there. I lived for a short time with an Inuit family in Pangnirtung, Baffin Island, just north of the Arctic Circle, and I was fascinated by their way of life, their humor, and their sense of mystery and wonder at the awesome nature around them. To me, the Arctic is like a great unconscious. Therefore, the title of Barry Lopez's wonderful book "Arctic Dreams" seemed also an apt description of this music.

In the opening section, *Inuit Landscape*, a solo trombone represents a lone human being calling out over a vast space amidst the sound of wind and storm. In *Throat Singing with Laughter* we hear the indomitable spirit of the Inuit through their sense of humor. Throat singing is a unique form of Inuit music, created by the rapid in- and out-takes of breath on fast rhythms, which incites almost continual laughter in the singers and onlookers alike. In *The Whispering Voices of the Spirits Who Ride with the Lights in the Sky*, we hear mysterious mutterings that make a gradual transformation into "gossamer curtains of light that seem to undulate across Arctic skies," (Lopez's description of the aurora borealis). The next section, *Polar Night*, is a montage of Arctic sounds (ghosts, wind, wolves), through which we hear the voices of Norwegian sailors whose boat is frozen in the ice for the winter.

In *Spring Light: Ice Floating in the Sun*, the winter ends and the thaw begins with the light increasing to an almost unbearable brightness. This leads directly into the next-to-last section, called *The Hunt*. To the Inuit, spring is literally the resurrection of life. The ominous four-month winter darkness ends and brings back the caribou, their primary source of food. Following the hunt is a joyous celebration, led by the Drum Dancer. The sculptures of Karoo Ashevak, several of which are called *Drum Dancer*, were my inspiration for this section.

Arctic Dreams was commissioned by James Keene for the 100th Anniversary of the University of Illinois Symphonic and Concert Bands, and to honor the retirement of my friend Jack McKenzie, dean of the College of Fine and Applied Arts. I want to express my appreciation to The Canada Council for the Senior Arts Grant that enabled me to travel to the Arctic, and do research and development for this work. *Arctic Dreams* is respectfully dedicated to Rosie Okpik and Enukie Akulukjuk of Pangnirtung.

Notes by the composers

ITHACA COLLEGE WIND ENSEMBLE
Stephen Peterson, conductor
Timothy Arnold, graduate conductor
Jonathan Musgrave, graduate conductor

Piccolo

Mira Shiffrin

Flute

Amelia Baran
 Lisa Meyerhofer*
 Andrea Reges
 Mira Shiffrin
 Corinne Shirk
 Allison Snee

Alto Flute

Amelia Baran
 Andrea Reges
 Corinne Shirk

Oboe

Alana Rosen*
 Rachel Seiden
 Andrew Whitson

English Horn

Andrew Whitson

Bassoon

Adam Gruschow
 Josh Malison*
 Maggie Oswald

Contrabassoon

Maggie Oswald

E♭ Clarinet

Brendon Lucas

B♭ Clarinet

Alyssa Barna
 Vanessa Calaban
 Emily Dobmeier
 Erik Jönsson*
 Devon LePore
 Stephen Fasteau

Bass Clarinet

Brad Pipenger
 Michael Colletti

Contrabass Clarinet

Michael Coletti

Alto Saxophone

Alyce Barron
 Rachel Perry*

Tenor Saxophone

Jason Saetta

Baritone Saxophone

Eric Troiano

Trumpet

Michael Banewicz
 Cyril Bodnar*
 Jennifer Fox
 L.J. Neal
 Nathaniel Sodeur
 Jonathan Stewart

Horn

Dana Barrett
 Michael Drennan*
 William Llarch
 Elizabeth Meade
 Tyler Ogilvie
 Maureen Preston

Trombone

Andrew Bennett*
 Ryan Kehaus
 Mark Neville
 Eddie Steenstra

Bass Trombone

Steven Cooney
 Michael Nave

Euphonium

Eric Dobmeier*
 Gregory Mantone

Tuba

Seth Magee*
 Timothy Orton

String Bass

Corey Stevens*
 Samuel Veneuille

Percussion

Emma Alban
 Andrew Dobos
 Beth Faulstick
 Daniel Pessalano
 Julia Ross
 Marco Schirripa*

Timpani

Anthony DiBartolo

Harp

Myra Kovary **

Accordian

Brendan Vavra

Throat Singers

Timothy Arnold
 Andrew Benware
 Ashley Carver
 Kathryn Cohen
 Dana Feinberg
 Lea Kazakis
 Jonathan Musgrave

* denotes principal
 ** guest artist

Concert Calendar

February

27 7:30 USAF Academy Stellar Brass

March

2 7:00 Faculty Recital: Jennifer Kay, mezzo-soprano
8:15 Symphonic Band; Elizabeth Peterson, conductor
8:15 Concert Band; Mark Fonder, conductor
5 3:00 Mary Hayes North Competition For Senior Piano Majors
7:00 Faculty Recital: Charis Dimaras, piano
7 3:00 Orchestra; Jeffery Meyer, conductor-- Annual Concerto Program
8 7:00 Faculty Recital: Wenqing Zhang and Nathan Hess, duo-pianists
8:15 Vocal Jazz Ensemble; Laurie Keegan, musical director
and Jazz Ensemble, Michael Titlebaum, musical director
10 7:00 Faculty Recital: Deborah Montgomery-Cove, soprano,
Brad Hougham, baritone, and Charis Dimaras, piano
11 7:00 Faculty Recital, Frank Gabriel Campos, trumpet
8:15 African Drumming and Dance Ensemble;
Baruch Whitehead, director
22 7:00 Faculty Ensemble: Ithaca Brass
24 7:00 Faculty Recital: David Unland, tuba
25 8:15 Women's Chorale; Janet Galván, conductor
and Brass Choir; Keith Kaiser, conductor
26 8:15 *Ithaca College Concerts 2009-10**
Cameron Carpenter, organ
27 8:15 Choir; Lawrence Doebler, conductor
28 4:00 Faculty Ensemble: Ariadne String Quartet
29 7:00 Guest Recital: Nathan Williams, clarinet
31 8:15 Concert Band; Mark Fonder, conductor
and Horseheads High School Wind Ensemble

Ithaca College Concerts 2009-10 (admission charge)

September 11 Zuill Bailey, violoncello and Awadagin Pratt, piano

February 13 Theodora Hanslowe, mezzo-soprano

March 26 Cameron Carpenter, organ